

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 0869

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT CH

SUBJ: A CASE STUDY OF EXPOSURE AND COVERUP

1. SUMMARY. THE MARCH 30 PEOPLE'S DAILY CARRIES A LONG CASE STUDY OF THE STRUGGLE THROUGHOUT 1977 TO EXPOSE HEILUNGKIANG FIRST SECRETARY LIU KUANG-TAO'S LINKS WITH THE GANG OF FOUR. SIGNED BY STAFF REPORTER YEH CHIEN-YUN, THE INVESTIGATIVE REPORT -- DEALING WITH EVENTS SOME 3 1/2 MONTHS IN THE PAST -- IS PUBLISHED WITHOUT EXPLANATION OR EDITORIAL NOTE. WE SUSPECT THAT PUBLICATION OF THE PIECE HAS LESS TO DO WITH THE SITUATION IN HEILUNGKIANG DURING 1977 THAN THE SITUATION IN PEKING IN 1978. SEVERAL OF YEH'S BLASTS AT THE UNNAMED LIU KUANG-TAO STRIKE US AS INDULGENCE IN THE TRADITIONAL CHINESE ARE OF "POINTING TO THE MULBERRY TO REVILE THE LOCUST TREE" -- IN THIS INSTANCE POINTING TO LIU TO REVILE PEKING BOSS WU TEH. END SUMMARY.

2. THE MARCH 30 PEOPLE'S DAILY CARRIES WITHOUT EXPLANATION OR EDITOR'S NOTE A LONG CASE STUDY OF THE 14-MONTH STRUGGLE IN HEILUNGKIANG TO SETTLE ACCOUNTS WITH THEN-FIRST PARTY SECRETARY
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LIU KUANG-TAO FOR HIS LINKS WITH THE GANG OF FOUR. ENTITLED "EXPOSING THE COVERUP PLOT OF THE FORMER LEADING RESPONSIBLE PERSON OF THE PROVINCIAL PARTY COMMITTEE," THE SIGNED ARTICLE BY STAFFREPORTER YEH CHIEN-YUN DOCUMENTS THE "STRUGGLE BETWEEN EXPOSURE AND COVERUP" WHICH RAGED IN HEILUNGKIANG THROUGHTOUT 1977. ALTHOUGH LIU KUANG-TAO IS NEVER MENTIONED BY NAME, THE USE OF EUPHEMISMS FOR LIU REFLECTS CURRENT STANDARDS OF

PARTY DECORUM RATHER THAN ANY ATTEMPT TO OBSCURE HIS IDENTITY.
ALL READERS WILL BE AWARE THAT IT WAS LIU WHO FELL IN DECEMBER
1977 AND WAS REPLACED BY YANG YI-CHEN.

3. THE CHARGES LEVELLED AGAINST LIU ARE SERIOUS: HE REFUSED
TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THERE HAD BEEN AN "EMPEROR" IN THE NORTHEAST
(IE.E. MAO TSE-TUNG'S NEPHEW MAO YUAN-HSIN, OFTEN DESCRIBED AS A
DE FACTO FIFTH MEMBER OF A GANG OF FIVE); HE IGNORED CHAIRMAN
HUA KUO-FENG'S APRIL 1977 INJUNCTION NOT TO UNDERESTIMATE THE
GANG'S INFLUENCE IN HEILUNGKIANG; HE LAUNCHED "COUNTERINVESTI-
GATIONS" AIMED AT PROVING THAT MAO YUAN-HSIN HAD NEVER BEEN
INFLUENTIAL IN HEILUNGKIANG; HE FILED A FALSE INVESTIGATION
REPORT TO CHAIRMAN HUA AND PARTY CENTRAL; AND HE TRIED TO SQUIRM
OUT OF A FINAL CONFRONTATION BY ABSENTING HIMSELF FROM HARBIN
AT A CRUCIAL JUNCTURE.

4. BUT SERIOUS AS THESE CHARGES ARE WE SUSPECT THAT PUBLICATION
OF THE STUDY -- DEALING WITH EVENTS AND PROBLEMS RESOLVED
SOME 3 1/2 MONTHS AGO -- HAS LESS TO DO WITH THE SITUATION IN
HEILUNGKIANG DURING 1977 THAN THE SITUATION IN PEKING (AND
PERHAPS SHENYANG) IN 1978. REPORTER YEH'S PURPOSE IS DIDACTIC;
SEVERAL OF HIS BLASTS AT LIU STRIKE US AS INDULGENCE IN THE
TRADITIONAL CHINESE ARE OF "POINTING TO THE MULBERRY TREE TO
REVILE THE LOCUST TREE."

5. YEH NOTES, WITH RATHER UNABASHED GLEE, THAT LIU WAS
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CONFRONTED BY ENRAGED MASSES IN OCTOBER 1977 AND COMPELLED
TO ADMIT THAT HE HAD PREVIOUSLY SLANDERED TENG HSIAO-PING
AND CRITICIZED THE "SO-CALLED 'THREE POISONOUS WEEDS'" OF
TENG. READERS OF PEOPLE'S DAILY WILL BE AWARE THAT
PEKING BOSS WU TEH, AS WELL AS OTHER POLITBURO LEADERS LIKE
WANG TUNG-HSING AND SHENYANG COMMANDER LI TEH-SHENG, HAVE NOT
YET BEEN CALLED TO PUBLIC ACCOUNT FOR SIMILAR POLITICAL ERRORS
IN THE PAST.

6. AS THE DAY OF RECKONING NEARED, THE ENCIRCLED LIU "IN THE
NAME OF PARTICIPATING IN PHYSICAL LABOR PLOTTED TO TOSS OUT
UNCEREMONIOUSLY FROM THE ENTRANCE WAY OF THE PROVINCIAL PARTY
ORGANS THE BROAD MASSES OF CADRES AND PEOPLE WHO HAD EXPOSED
HIM, AND WENT TO PARTICIPATE IN PHYSICAL LABOR FAR FROM HIS
BASIC UNIT." ALTHOUGH REPORTER YEH DOES NOT MAKE THE
CONNECTION, THE READER OF PEOPLE'S DAILY WILL BE AWARE THAT
LIU'S EARLY DECEMBER EXCURSION TO PARTICIPATE IN PHYSICAL
LABOR WOULD HAVE BEEN KEYED TO THE HIGHLY PUBLICIZED STINT
OF PHYSICAL LABOR BY CHAIRMAN HUA AND VARIOUS COLLEAGUES AT
MIYUN RESERVOIR. WHILE TENG HSIAO-PING STAYED AWAY (OR WAS
EXCLUDED) FROM THAT GATHERING, SUCH EMBATTLED POLITBURO MEMBERS
AS WU TEH WERE VERY MUCH IN EVIDENCE ALONGSIDE CHAIRMAN HUA.

7. THE ENTIRE INDICTMENT AGAINST LIU, WE SUSPECT, COULD BE
TURNED AGAINST WU TEH WITH VERY FEW MODIFICATIONS.

8. BEYOND THIS, AS HONG KONG AND USLO HAVE OBSERVED MANY TIMES
IN THE PAST, ANY ATTACK ON COVERUPS AND COVERT LINKS WITH THE
GANG OF FOUR IN THE NORTHEAST ULTIMATELY CALLS INTO QUESTION
THE POSITION OF POLITBURO MEMBER/SHENYANG MR COMMANDER
LI TEH-SHENG AND THAT OF HIS ASSOCIATE TSENG SHAO-SHAN, THE
FIRST PARTY SECRETARY IN LIAONING.
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